



PROGRAM NOTICE



FEMA/USFA/NFA ANNOUNCES CHANGES TO THE EXECUTIVE FIRE OFFICER PROGRAM (EFOP)

Summary:

The Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) United States Fire Administration (USFA) announces a number of changes to the EFOP. During 2000, various activities were conducted to review and assess the EFOP. A variety of studies and groups offered recommendations and USFA has already incorporated a number of process changes during the 1st quarter of FY 01 (FY 01 consists of the time period between October 1, 2000 and September 30, 2001). Other modifications will be implemented over the next two years. The following is a summary of the most notable changes:

- *Target Audience:* The EFOP target audience will largely remain the same, but beginning in FY 02 USFA will feature a "Key Leaders" participation component. A limited number of non executive-level applicants who are serving in "key leadership" positions will be considered for the EFOP. Please refer to the "Key Leaders Selection Criteria" for more information.
- *Four Year Core Curriculum:* Presently EFOP features a three-year core curriculum with an additional year consisting of a choice between five elective courses. USFA strongly believes that the EFOP experience should include an executive level curriculum devoted to risk reduction and prevention. A new curriculum will be designed and offered beginning in FY 03. Therefore, this curriculum will affect EFOP participants who enter EFOP in FY 01 and later.
- *Academic Requirement:* All EFOP applicants must presently possess a minimum academic achievement of an Associates Degree from a regionally accredited college or university for further consideration. Beginning October 1, 2009, all applicants must possess a minimum of a Bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college or university. This requirement is consistent with the International Association of Fire Chiefs "Chief Fire Officer Professional Designation" program.

A variety of other changes have either been made or will be enacted to improve the completion of Applied Research Projects, the EFOP Graduate Symposium, existing courses within the EFOP, and other programmatic areas.

January 2001

Federal Emergency Management Agency
United States Fire Administration
National Fire Academy
16825 South Seton Avenue
Emmitsburg, Maryland 21727

Context For Changes

The Executive Fire Officer Program (EFOP) has existed since 1985 with over 1500 senior fire executives having successfully completed this professional development opportunity. In 1995 USFA conducted a review that led to the elimination of a mandatory core curriculum, introducing a set of elective courses in the third year. A new course entitled *Strategic Management of Change* was added at the same time. During the 15 years of EFOP the selection criteria has not changed except for the prerequisite of an Associate Degree added in 1990.

During 1999 and 2000 FEMA initiated “*Project Impact*”, a program to assist communities in identifying and mitigating conditions that result in their becoming more disaster resistant. Concurrently USFA conducted a series of strategy sessions that have resulted in renewed emphasis on the role of mitigation in reducing the nation’s fire problem. Specifically, FEMA/USFA is seeking opportunities to reinforce the value of prevention, education, and community risk-reduction in every American community. A revised USFA mission and values statement reinforces these shared beliefs.

USFA also desires to reinforce the value of research in providing solutions and avenues for coping with contemporary issues and problems. The inclusion of EFOP participants performing Applied Research within the EFOP will continue.

USFA recognizes that America’s communities are becoming even more diverse with senior executive officers in ideal roles to improve fairness and diversity within the fire and emergency services. The EFOP should reflect the diversity of fire and emergency services, including participant demographics, communities represented, and the curriculum provided.

Significant input has been received over the last few years regarding the scope and direction of the EFOP. The announced changes to the EFOP incorporate a broad range of input while reinforcing the strategic direction of USFA. USFA recognizes that the fire problem will only be lessened through the collective efforts of those in senior leadership positions at the state and local level. Because of the past successes of EFOP, USFA places a renewed emphasis on this premier executive education program as an opportunity to significantly lessen fire and other emergency services related problems.

Revised Statement of Purpose

The Executive Fire Officer Program (EFOP) is an initiative of the United States Fire Administration/National Fire Academy designed to provide senior officers and others in key leadership roles with:

- An understanding of:
 - the need to transform fire and emergency services organizations from being reactive to proactive; with an emphasis on leadership development, prevention, and risk-reduction;

- transforming fire and emergency services organizations to reflect the diversity of America's communities;
- the value of research and its application to the profession; and
- the value of lifelong learning.
- Enhanced executive-level knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to lead these transformations, conduct research, and engage in lifelong learning.

The officers enhance their professional development through a unique series of four graduate and upper-division-baccalaureate equivalent courses. The EFOP spans a 4-year period with 4 core courses. Each course is 2 weeks in length.

EFOP participant must complete an Applied Research Project (ARP) that relates to their organization within 6 months after the completion of each of the four courses. **NOTE: Completion of the ARP is a prerequisite for attending the next course in the sequence of the program.** A certificate of completion for the entire EFOP is awarded only after the successful completion of the final research project.

Target Audience

The EFOP target audience is current and emerging executive-level leaders in fire and emergency services organizations. The selection criteria are divided between two requirement areas: Service Requirement and Academic Requirement.

Service Requirement

- Chief of Department or equivalent.
- All other chief officers.
- Chief officers or equivalent who head major bureaus or divisions within a fire department, e.g. suppression, prevention, training, emergency medical services, etc.
- Chief officers and senior deputies of State governmental fire organizations, e.g., State Fire Marshals and State Directors of Fire Training.
- Other individuals who are serving in "key leadership" positions. Please refer to "Key Leaders" selection criteria.

Academic Requirement

- Applicants must have attained an Associate's degree or greater from a regionally accredited institution of higher learning. No exception will be made to this requirement.
- Beginning October 1, 2009 (FY 2010), applicants must have attained a minimum of a Bachelor's degree.

“Key Leaders” Selection Criteria

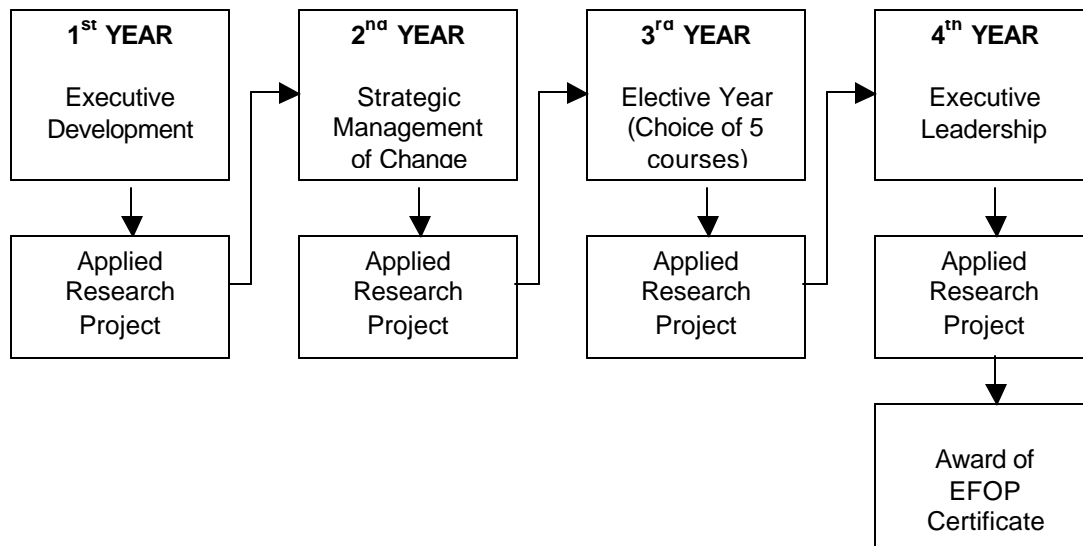
The EFOP is USFA's premier executive education program with a limited capacity of participants each year. The primary audience is executive-level chief officers; however, beginning in FY 02 a limited number of non executive-level applicants who are serving in “key leadership” positions will be considered for the EFOP. Once the minimum Academic Requirement has been demonstrated, candidates will be selected on the following criteria:

- An advanced academic degree from a regionally accredited college or university.
- Successful completion of the NFA Leadership Development Program or comparable training.
- Unique perspectives that broaden the diversity of EFOP.
- Strength of the department chief's or sponsor's recommendation, commitment to supporting the applicant's participation and description of the applicant's potential impact on the organization.
- Personal accomplishments and significant contributions to the fire and emergency services and/or the community.
- Potential for future impact on the fire service.

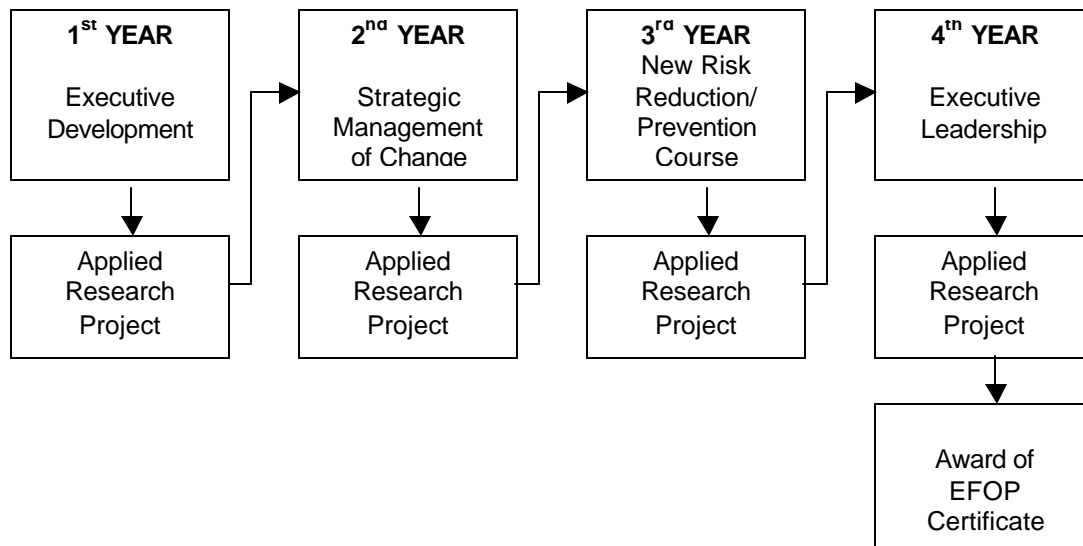
It is expected that the number of applications for these limited number of positions will be very competitive in nature. Therefore, applicants are encouraged to carefully review all of aforementioned and following selection/application elements.

Four-Year Curriculum

Presently the EFOP curriculum will remain as follows for those currently enrolled (those EFOP participants who began prior to FY 01)



For those participants who were accepted to begin EFOP in FY 01, the curriculum will be as follows:



How To Apply

Note: Candidates may submit an application package at any time during the year. However, there is a cutoff date of June 30 for each fiscal year. Thus, in order to be considered for the FY 2002 (October 1, 2001 to September 30, 2002) EFOP, the application must be postmarked no later than June 30, 2001. Applications postmarked after that date will be considered for the next fiscal year.

Application packages will be reviewed on an individual basis and will require six separate items:

1. A General Admissions Application. In Block #9A, please specify "Executive Fire Officer Program." http://www.usfa.fema.gov/nfa/tr_gen.htm#Application
2. A letter from the applicant requesting admission to the EFOP. The letter should specify applicant's qualifications (see eligibility sections); commitment to complete the entire program, including the applied research; and the applicant's perceived expectation(s) of the program.
3. The applicant's resume.
4. A letter of recommendation from the applicant's immediate supervisor (Chief of Department, Mayor, City Manager, etc.), indicating the organization's commitment to allow the applicant to complete the required courses and research.
5. A photocopy of the applicant's terminal academic degree or transcript. Photocopies of other courses and training programs are not necessary.
6. An organizational chart that depicts the applicant's current position.

The application package must be sent to:

Office of Admissions, Building I, Room 216
National Emergency Training Center
16825 South Seton Avenue
Emmitsburg, MD 21727-8998

EFOP candidates who have complied with the EFOP minimum prerequisites will be forwarded a secondary, essay-based application form. Both application forms, as well as the accompanying materials, will be evaluated in assessing each applicant's qualifications for EFOP acceptance. Final selection is competitive due to the limited number of available slots. Each applicant will be notified in writing as to either acceptance or non-acceptance into the EFOP. Qualified women and minority candidates are encouraged to apply.

Interested parties are encouraged to review EFOP information and download application forms on the USFA website at: http://www.usfa.fema.gov/nfa/tr_efop.htm

For additional questions or application materials please contact::

United States Fire Administration
National Fire Programs
Executive Fire Officer Program
Building J – Room 235
16825 South Seton Avenue
Emmitsburg, MD 21727-8998

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